

REMARKS

The enclosed is responsive to the Examiner's Office Action mailed on May 28, 2004. At the time the Examiner mailed the Office Action claims 1-27 were pending. By way of the present response the Applicants have: 1) amended claims 1, 2, 6-8, 22, 24, 27; 2) added no new claims; and 3) canceled claims 20, 21, and 23. As such, claims 1-19, 22, and 24-27 are now pending. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application and the allowance of all claims now presented.

In the office action dated May 28, 2004, the Examiner rejected claims 1-11, 14-17, 20, and 22-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Becker, et al., U.S. Publication No. 2002/0130904 (hereinafter "Becker"). The Examiner rejected claims 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in light of Becker in view of Vaananen, U.S. Publication No. 2004/00144565, (hereinafter Vaananen). The Examiner rejected claims 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in light of Becker in view of Helfman, et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,396,513, (hereinafter Helfman).

Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims as amended herein are allowable over Becker, Vaananen and Helfman. Becker describes an instant messaging (IM) graphical user interface (GUI) for managing a plurality of concurrent IM sessions. Specifically, Figure 1 of Becker discloses a plurality of tabs (110-114) each of which represents an IM session with a different user. Becker also discloses that the status of each IM session may

be represented by the graphical characteristics of each of the tabs. As described in Becker,

. . . a session may be engaged, non-engaged with no unread messages, non-engaged with at least one unread message, and non-engaged with at least one unread message having just been received. Any suitable coding technique may be used, including such well know coding techniques as color, texture, animation (including flashing), sound, icon, or some combination thereof. One example of session tab coding is to use blue to indicate the engaged messaging session, white to indicate all non-engaged messaging sessions which do not contain any unread message, red to indicate all non-engaged messaging sessions which contains at least one unread message, and flashing red to indicate a non-engaged messaging session that has just received a message. Becker, ¶ [0041].

However, Becker does not disclose or suggest providing an indication of the number of messages received within each of a plurality of indicators which corresponds to one or more IM sessions, as recited in independent claims 1, 22, 24 and 27. Rather, Becker merely provides an indication as to whether "at least one" unread message has been received. Providing an indication of the number of pending messages, as claimed herein, is useful because it allows the user to identify those IM sessions with the greatest amount of IM activity.

Applicants further submit that neither Vaananen nor Helfman suggests providing an indication of the number of messages received within each of a plurality of IM indicators.

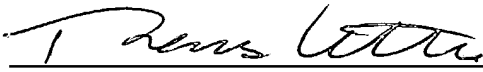
CONCLUSION

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that all rejections have been overcome and that all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

If there are any additional charges, please charge them to our Deposit Account Number 02-2666. If a telephone conference would facilitate the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Thomas C. Webster at (408) 720-8300.

Respectfully Submitted,
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